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of the population of every country who can write their names and spell out the headlines of a newspaper are absolutely unable to read in the true sense of the word. These Oviedo professors have been able to help some men and women of this class to understand the purpose of a dictionary, to develop in a small degree the power of abstraction, and to catch at least a hint of the charm of imaginative literature.

At first there was no thought of children in the courses. But when a class of laborers was driven to protest because a group of little girls insisted on coming in and embarrassing them by visibly following the subject-matter of their course better than they themselves were doing, another professor was detailed to take the little girls separately; and now there are separate series of lectures for children, and others for women.

The Spaniard is not a marvel of patience and perseverance; and when, with this fact in mind, we learn that the attendance at these courses has grown from a hundred or two the first year to twelve or fifteen hundred in 1909-10, it seems clear that the lectures are accomplishing something of substantial good. It is true that in the sense which the English universities have given the phrase, what is being done at Oviedo is not university extension at all; but it is possible that these lectures and classes are bringing some starved souls quite as valuable aid as an A.B. or a diploma. There is something pathetic as well as inspiring in the thought of these poorly paid upholders of the torch of learning in an illiterate country and their sturdy effort to spread the light beyond the walls of their own little institution; and it is comforting to know that the effort is being crowned with success.

ROY TEMPLE HOUSE

NORMAN, OKLAHOMA

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### HOME SCHOOLS

Scattered here and there in the public-school system of America are schools bearing a new message in education. These are known as "home schools," and may be looked upon as the most hopeful spots in modern secondary education for girls.

That a more intelligent supervision and care of the home is necessary in America is recognized by all most closely in touch with our present social conditions. The weaknesses and dangers of our civilization may be traced to the home, or, more hopefully expressed, the remedy for the weaknesses and dangers of our social and industrial structure lies in the home. Far-sighted settlement workers have been putting forth effort along this line for many years, but it is only within the past few months, one might almost say, that this responsibility has been recognized by the public schools. The enlargement of the functions of the public schools goes on with such amazing rapidity that the "visions" of superintendents, principals, and teachers become facts almost before the public has recognized the presence of a new demand and a new responsibility. So it is not surprising that in a night, as

it were, housecraft schools should have sprung up in Los Angeles, New York, Providence, and Boston, and here and there in the cities of the Middle West. The lines of development in these various cities differ with the needs of the locality, but all have as their motive a more complete, thorough, and rational training of girls in all matters pertaining to home-making.

In Los Angeles, in connection with the Utah Street School, which is in an almost foreign neighborhood, is one of the most fascinating and picturesque home schools in America. The children in that district are chiefly Spanish, Italian, and Russian, many possessing a rare foreign beauty. The Russian girls all wear the little shawls over their heads, many of these decorative garments being very gay and elaborately embroidered, and all the children wear the plain, full skirts of gay-colored cottons, and low slippers and bright hose. There is a large school building for the regular academic work, and in the same yard are bungalows for other uses. There is one bungalow for the Sloyd, one for the sewing, and one for the home school. Besides, there is a day nursery for babies whose mothers must go out to work by the day. The home school is a new five-room bungalow built for the purpose. It is attractively furnished, and two of the teachers live there. The older girls of the school come over in groups to do the work; they make the beds in the morning, wash the dishes, and clean the house. Another group comes over and prepares the luncheon, ten of the teachers having luncheon there, and another group in the afternoon clears off the luncheon, washes the dishes, and does any other necessary housekeeping. The girls are also taught laundry work. In warm, bright, sunshiny California, this home-school bungalow is particularly attractive, with these pleasant girls in their clean, bright frocks slipping in and out about their work.

Although New England has been called a little slow in trying new educational ventures, yet no other American city has so thoroughly tested the value of continuation schools as has Boston. Continuation classes in dry goods, in shoe and leather work, in banking, in salesmanship, and in metal work have been tried and established as a valuable part of the Boston school system. The latest continuation course to be established is that of home-making, conducted in the North End of Boston, in the North Bennet Street Industrial School. The rooms were remodeled to meet home conditions, and about twenty different firms are allowing small bands of their girls, perhaps numbering fifteen, to leave their work for two hours twice a week to attend these classes in housecraft. The approval of this plan by the factory-owners is evidenced by their willingness to pay the girls their regular wages, notwithstanding the four hours each week spent in studying home-making. These classes offer thirty-two two-hour lessons, and include housekeeping, cooking, the selection of proper foods, the planning of household furnishings, and training as to the suitable selection of color and design in dress. The instruction is conversational and informal, and the girls, many of whom expect soon to be married, take up the work seriously and intelligently. The employers

have been quick to realize that this break in the routine of the factory does not tend to lower the grade of work done by the girls, but rather to raise it, and all concede that some form of self-improvement must be offered girls after leaving the public schools. The fatigue which comes after work-hours often makes it impossible for the wage-earning girl to avail herself of the opportunities offered in the night schools. So these continuation schools, which provide vocational training during working hours, are meeting a new educational demand.

In Providence, Rhode Island, is another most interesting home school, quite unique among schools of this character in preserving most perfectly the simple, industrious atmosphere of a well managed home. On entering, one does not have the feeling of visiting a school, but rather of being entertained in some private home where all the members of the family are busy with some agreeable domestic task. Mr. Randall J. Condon, the superintendent of the Providence schools, held such a clear and concrete conception as to the possibilities of a housecraft school for girls that it has been possible for broad and varied activities to crystallize in a perfectly natural and simple way in this Providence home school. Although under the regular public-school system, and offering free instruction, yet this home school is in no way formally affiliated with the grammar or high schools. The work is not required, neither do the children receive credits for it, and all attending do so voluntarily. This idea of Mr. Condon's, to keep the home school free from the routine and harness of the regular public-school work, has done much toward making it possible to develop there the free and informal atmosphere of home life.

The building selected is a commonplace five-room flat situated in one of the poorer and more thickly settled districts of the city. The arrangement of rooms is well adapted to the use, including a small hall, living-room, sewing-room, dining-room, kitchen, bedroom, bath-room, and a basement laundry. Since the opening of the school, the first week in December, the girls have done all the work of the home except caring for the furnace. They have built the fire in the kitchen range, and have done all the cleaning and laundry work, made all the aprons used in cooking, serving, and cleaning, and have hemmed all the dish towels and table linen.

The work in this school has been divided into three courses, the housework, the cooking, and the sewing. A comprehensive course in housework has been carried out, including (1) bedmaking, and all that pertains to the hygienic care of the sleeping room; bed-making for the sick, and the care of the home sickroom; (2) cleaning, sweeping, dusting, and care of floors, rugs, curtains, draperies, etc.; (3) laundry work; (4) the serving of meals; (5) informal talks on hygiene; (6) informal talks on books. The cooking has been planned to give a knowledge of the proper preparation of simple home food and the serving of it to a small family. Wholesome and well balanced combinations of food suitable for breakfast, luncheon or supper, and dinner have been prepared and served, and special attention has been given to the making

of good bread, biscuits, muffins, and other essentials in home cooking. Since in every home the kitchen exists to provide for the dining-room, there has been daily co-operation between the cooking and housework classes, and so far as possible all the articles cooked in the kitchen have been served in the dining-room. This has given practice in many ways of serving, as well as in table manners, and has given the cooking classes experience in the punctual and appetizing preparation of food. The sewing-course aims to give the girl a knowledge of how to make simple garments, aprons, sheets, and pillow-cases, how to hem table linen, and how to make inexpensive articles for home-adornment.

This work in housecraft, although elastic and meeting more individual needs than the rigid demands of a class, is so planned as to offer a two-year course for the older girls and a three-year course for the younger ones.

With all the varied interests pursued at the Providence home school, no effort has been made to compete in any way with the technical and trade schools, or any other institutions where industrial work can be better done, but rather to preserve the simple, homelike character of the work, and to stimulate and cultivate in the girls, so far as possible, a love for household duties. As the afternoon classes are composed chiefly of grammar-school children, and the evening classes of working girls, a wide opportunity is offered through the home school of reaching and influencing, in an intimate way, young people from many different walks of life.

Regarding the work of all home-making schools, it may be said that what sometimes appears to be a distaste for the duties of motherhood grows largely out of the fact that the interests of the girl of today have been transferred from the home to other centers of activity. Her wage-earning pursuits are not carried on in her home, neither do her pleasures center there. The office, the club, the shop, the dance-hall, and a score of other associations have estranged her sympathies and tastes from the home environment. Woman is instinctively creative, and this instinct expresses itself, biologically, in the function of motherhood. The natural and normal outlet for creative self-expression is the bearing and rearing of children and the building-up of the home and the home life. So to every girl, in whatever walk of life, should be given the training and education which will awaken her enthusiasm and enchain her interest in the vocation of home-making. And the precepts taught, and the ideals held out to her as to the scope of the home, must be alluring, ever-growing ones, including all the essentials of a progressive life. The home must grow to house the enlarging activities and responsibilities of woman that all her most vital interests may focus within the home, and give to her a growing ideal of the responsibility, the dignity, and the beauty of life, that becomes the "vision" for all humanity.

ADA WILSON TROWBRIDGE

THE HOME SCHOOL  
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